

Notes of Sermons preached by Pastor Henry Haddow at Brockham Green
on Lord's Day November 13th 1910.

Morning sermon

I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? (Psalm 118:5,6)

How true, as you have been singing:

*At most we do but taste the cup,
For Thou alone hast drunk it up. (Joseph Hart)*

Surely we have Christ's sufferings brought under our notice in this psalm. This is the language of Christ, as it becomes the language of every member of His mystical body: *I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.* Every child of God will long to know something of the sufferings of Christ, and have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. I would never have been able to speak of the sufferings of Christ, as I would speak of them. No servant of God ever has, as he would speak of them.

*Of His sufferings so intense,
Angels have no perfect sense.
Who can rightly comprehend
Their beginning or their end?
'Tis to God, and God alone,
That their weight is fully known. (Joseph Hart)*

The eternal Son of God veiled His deity in human flesh, and tabernacled among men. In that human flesh He suffered, the God-man. He who could say: *The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10)*

Have you ever seen Christ in His sufferings, crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man?

*Through sufferings perfect, now He reigns,
And shares in all their griefs and pains. (Thomas Kelly)*

O blessed Jesus, O Thou Lamb of God that wast once slain! I long sometimes to gaze upon Him, and throughout the countless ages of never ending eternity. If ever I go to heaven, I shall never tire of gazing upon Him who gave Himself for me. If we see Him in glory, we must see Him in time, that is, as His redeemed will see Him. All will see Him, but I am speaking of seeing Him as the redeemed see Him. They see Him as the Lamb slain. And they fall at His blessed feet, and crown Him Lord of all.

Has it ever been your concern as to whether John beheld the crown that was placed upon His head by Him? *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. (Revelation 19:12)* It exercised my soul only last Friday. Have you crowned the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, you will know something of the things we hope to bring before you of the sufferings of Christ. Every soul united to Him will know something of His sufferings, of His distress, and calling upon the Lord, and the Lord setting Him in a large place, and all fear being taken away. *I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! (Luke 12:50)* Christ knew what it was to be in distress. Many years since those words were helpful to me, where the Lord speaks to the sons of Zebedee as to whether they were able to drink of the cup He was about to drink. And they said: *We are able. (Matthew 20:22)* They did not know what Christ was about to suffer. Well, He promised them a taste of the cup. He suffered hunger, and the hidings of God's face. He suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane.

*Backwards and forwards thrice He ran,
As if He sought some help from man. ((Joseph Hart)*

O what sufferings! He wrestled with the powers of darkness. God sent an angel to strengthen Him. I should like to see that angel. I looked at these words last night; I read them again and again: *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8)* He poured out His heart in prayer unto God; He prayed unto the Father.

I do not want to go to heaven in any other way – in fact, there is only one way – through distress and sufferings, to be brought, as God brings sinners, to call upon Him. What do you and I know of distress? I like close preaching; I do not mind how close it is when I am a hearer. I want to go to heaven the right way. God brings sinners into distress and trouble. I have only to preach to you malady and remedy. Do I know anything of godly sorrow for sin? I hope your souls will be solemnly exercised concerning these things. Have you ever known the burden of sin, and to go before the Lord in agony and distress? I have been afraid to go to bed, lest I should wake in hell. I do not set this up as a standard. The Holy Spirit shall convince of sin. Every one shall know the plague of his own heart. He will have to know something of calling upon the Lord, and to know the salvation of God. When the sinner is convinced of sin, he says, “What must I do to be saved?” He thinks he is under some covenant.

*Can any door of hope be found?
Not any sure, on nature’s ground. (John Berridge)*

In his distress he calls upon the Lord; he seeks some secret place, it may be, to pour out his heart unto the Lord. A prayer is squeezed out of the distressed soul: “Lord, help me. *Pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.*” (*Psalm 25:11*) Is there one here in distress, who feels something of the pangs of hell getting hold of you? You say that is very close. Are you seeking mercy? Do you want pardon, peace, salvation? It is a mercy if there is one here. Lord, in trouble have they called upon Thee.

I am speaking more particularly of the work of grace in the beginning. Is there one who is calling upon the Lord in distress? It shall come to pass that such shall be saved. They shall obtain mercy. If they are not numbered with God’s people as some are, they shall be. Sinner, with your head bowed down, O what a word is this: *I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. (Isaiah 45:19)*

*Did ever sinner sink to woe,
Thirsting for pardoning peace?
Ten thousand voices answer, No,
None die that seek His face.*

I was looking at a hymn last evening, and I marked it in my book. The hymn was:

*Come hither, ye by sin distressed,
And hear the Saviour’s faithful word;
Soon ye shall enter into rest,
And know that He’s your conquering Lord. (Henry Fowler)*

O seeking soul, it will come to pass in your experience – you shall enter into rest.

*Then hail, ye happy mourners,
Who pass through tribulation;
Sin’s filth and guilt, perceived and felt,
Make known God’s great salvation. (Joseph Hart)*

You would give all the world calls good or great if this could come to pass in your experience. He is faithful that hath promised. Where He hears, He answers. None can keep them but the Lord. You read the prayers of Solomon at the dedication of the temple. He prays for that stranger. Perhaps you feel like the stranger. Well, go on praying. *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. (Lamentations 3:26)* Those that wait for God's salvation, shall God's salvation see.

These are not waiting days, according to some men's teaching. I once heard a man addressing over a hundred people, and he said that not one need leave that building without the peace of God in his soul. Inwardly, I said, Liar! There must be the work of the Holy Ghost to convince of sin, and to give repentance and faith. He lives to save to the uttermost. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. (John 12:32)* Not one chosen in Him but who will be brought unto Him. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (John 6:37)* He will never cast you out if you are coming to Him. But I dare not say that you need not leave this place without the peace of God in your soul. There is a set time to favour Zion. Spread your case at His feet as best you can, and the Lord will answer you, in spite of all your feelings to the contrary.

*The time of love will come,
When we shall clearly see,
Not only that He shed His blood,
But each shall say, "For me." (A M Toplady)*

You will have the portion as yours one day. You will say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his mercy endureth for ever. I called upon the Lord in distress." Very personal, friends. Religion is a personal thing. There is not only the first calling upon the Lord in distress, and His setting you in a large place – there is a large place when the Lord reveals Himself to you, and says: *I have loved thee with an everlasting love* – but there comes in that man's experience deeper distress. You read the *107th Psalm verse 6*, and you find that it was in distress that they called upon the Lord. Again in the *13th, 19th and 28th verses* you have similar words.

*Though distresses now attend thee,
And thou tread'st the thorny road,
His right hand shall still defend thee. (John Fawcett)*

Those that know these things know that God is power, wisdom, mercy and salvation. They love Him because He heard the voice of their supplication. As long as we are in the wilderness we shall know something of this distress, and calling upon the name of the Lord.

Blessed be the name of the Lord who attendeth unto the voice of His people. Look at a father when the child is in distress – how his love goes to that one. Like as a father pitieth his children, the Lord goes to their relief.

*He sees me often overcome,
And pities my distress;
And bids affliction drive me home,
To anchor on His grace. (Thomas Greene)*

You do not like it, do you, so far as the flesh is concerned, when affliction comes upon you. What is God's purpose in it? To drive you home to anchor on His grace. O what a sure anchorage! Sweet affliction that brings my Saviour near.

May the Lord add His blessing.

Afternoon Sermon

I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? (Psalm 118:5,6)

We spoke a few things this morning concerning Christ's distress, and His calling upon the Lord, and the Lord answering Him. He is now set down at the right hand of God the Father. And we then went on to speak of the members of His mystical body being brought into distress, and calling upon the Lord.

What a mercy to be a sinner in distress, calling upon the name of the Lord! You will find the psalmist speak in several places of calling upon the Lord in distress – in the 18th and 120th. The psalmist often speaks of his trouble and of God hearing him. What a mercy to be enabled to speak of these things! Every soul that is quickened into divine life calls upon the name of the Lord. If you have been convinced of sin, you call upon the Lord, although sometimes He has seemed not to regard you.

*Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near. (James Montgomery)*

The Lord knows the mind of the spirit in a groan. He hates to put away. He will hear your prayers in heaven His dwelling place. You will have this gracious experience the psalmist speaks of in the words of our text. It is when the Lord sends forth the Spirit of adoption into the heart, and you can say:

*My God, my Father, blissful name!
O may I call Thee mine? (Anne Steele)*

What a mercy to know that I have a Father in heaven who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all I can ask or even think! Some have lost their earthly parent, but O to be able to say: “**my** Father, **my** God!” We are often in distress. But as often as fresh troubles come, He sends some cheering ray. Our Father does not forget us when we are in trouble. Sometimes you feel you can leave it all in His blessed hands. The Lord knoweth what is best. *Father, Thy will be done.*

I had a hymn on my mind the whole of last evening, and it came to pass, as it often does, that friend Petit gave it out this morning. (*Hymn 1028*) One verse has been on my mind the whole of the day, and just before I came into the pulpit I thought I would refer to it, but it came to pass as I got into the pulpit friend Clark gave out the verse:

*Though distresses now attend thee,
And thou tread'st the thorny road,
His right hand shall still defend thee;
etc. (John Fawcett)*

What a mercy, when these distresses attend you, if you have a Father in heaven! Sometimes earthly parents do not hear from their children unless they are in trouble. We have in the *Book of Isaiah chapter 26 and verse 16: LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.* Christ has ever been the strength of the needy in distress. The Lord is on my side. The Lord is for me. If God be for us, who can be against us? Is God for me, and on my side? O, say some of this congregation, this is a big ‘if’, a double ‘if’. Well, if the Lord has done the things I have tried to bring before you, He **is** for you. God's people are made honest, and they dare not use this language when they have the witness within. The Lord is for me. In election He is for me. He has called me by His grace. O blessed man indeed who has the witness that the Lord is for you!

Christ could use this language, and so could David – and some in this house of prayer can use this language: “God is on my side. The eternal God is for me.” O blessed soul that can use this language! He is on my side to keep me in all my warfare and conflict. He will strengthen me.

The soul having this witness goes in the strength of the Lord, and makes mention of His righteousness.

*He'll strengthen me, help me, and cause me to stand,
Upheld by His righteous, omnipotent hand. (Kirkham)*

He is on my side to direct me. We do want the Lord to direct us:

*Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah!
Pilgrim through this barren land. (William Williams)*

He is on our side to direct us, and feeling this at times, we go before Him and plead with Him. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. (Psalm 73:24)* It is a mercy to have grace given us to wait the Lord's counsel. *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD. (Psalm 37:23)* *Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk. (Psalm 143:8)* Those that know the Lord is on their side look to the Lord for counsel. His ancient people believed when they saw His works. *He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul. (Psalm 106:15)* He is on my side to counsel me, to provide for me. He gives me those things which are best for me; to do the good pleasure of His will, and to bring me safely through.

You think of it for one moment, and if you are not lost in wonderment, I do not envy you. God on the side of the sinful, rebellious man! Sometimes the feeling of my poor soul is: *What is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! (Psalm 144:3)* I sin against Thee, rebel against Thee. What is man that Thou art on his side? There was a time when we feared God was against us; but there came a time when He favoured us blessedly to realise that He had thoughts of peace and not of evil towards us.

*On us His fond affection ran,
Long ere creation's work began.*

The Lord is for me. This is manifest in the gift of Christ. *He spared not his own Son.* What can I lack if the Lord is on my side? I would rather have this witness in my soul, than know that all the universe was for me. I am not speaking against people being on our side for one moment. Men may turn against us, but the Lord will ever be for us. He is of one mind, and none can turn Him. It is increasingly the desire of my soul to know that the Lord is for me. He is with His people wherever they are. He will never leave them.

When I come into the river of Jordan, I want to realise that the Lord is for me, His rod and staff to comfort me. Do not be satisfied with anything short of this: The Lord is for me. This will stand, and will live, when the world is in a blaze. This will make a man say: I will not fear. Nothing short of this will enable a soul to say: I will not fear. The Lord speaks to His people. He is on their side to help them. When the Lord says: *Fear not*, the soul is as strong as a lion. There is no cause for fear. It must be well if God is for me.

Things may appear against you, but they cannot be really. So if God is for you: *All things work together for good to them that love God. (Romans 8:28)* The soul may say, as God strengthens:

*Since all that I meet shall work for my good,
The bitter is sweet, the medicine is food. (John Newton)*

I will not fear; God has promised to provide. I hope I can say I know something of this in some humble measure. You can say: I will not fear, when God strengthens you in the inner man. O to be thus delivered from all fear! God's people shall triumph over the powers of darkness. *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; for the Lord is on my side. (Micah 7:8)*

Perhaps you will say: You are right about me now. Well, go on asking the Lord to do these things for you. What He has done for His people, He is able to do for you. When the psalmist asks this question: *What can man do unto me?* the Lord may permit men to do some things to you, but others He will never permit them to do. This *118th Psalm* was Luther's favourite psalm. Your enemies may compass you about like bees. Luther knew this in a very large measure, and so do God's people in their measure. Luther said: "Though the tiles were devils he would not fear. He says: What can man do unto me? Men may speak against you, but they can never erase your name from the Lamb's Book of Life. He ever lives, my Saviour lives."

*If my immortal Saviour lives,
Then my immortal life is sure. (Anne Steele)*

What can man do unto me?

I must leave the subject. May the Lord add His blessing.